




FARMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

	Policy Number: 246-04	Effective Date: 09/28/2016	
	Subject: Bombs/Explosive Devices		
	Approved by:  Steven D. Hebbe, Chief of Police		

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for response to incidents involving actual or threatened use of bombs/explosive devices.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Farmington Police Department to respond to reports of actual or threatened use of bombs/explosive devices in an attempt to reduce the risk to persons and property to the extent possible.

PROCEDURE:

Definitions:

Bomb Threat: A Bomb Threat condition exists when a suspected bomb/explosive device has been reported but not located.

Bomb Emergency: A Bomb Emergency exists when a suspected or actual bomb/explosive device has been located or when an explosion occurs.

Communications/Receiving/Reporting Bomb Threats:

San Juan County Communications Authority (Communication Center) and Department personnel receiving bomb threat information attempt to obtain all information available and respond according to the following procedures:

1. Keep the reporting party on the line and determine, if possible, the reason for suspicion that an explosive device may be present;
2. Dispatch a patrol unit immediately;
3. Notify a supervisor of the situation;
4. Dispatch the Farmington Fire Department to stage in a safe area.

Responding Officers Responsibilities:

All responding units cease radio and cellular telephone transmissions within a 300 foot area of the bomb threat location or device. Electromagnetic energy emitted by the radios or phones may activate the device.

Contact is made with the person in charge of the premises and, if possible, the person who reported the threat.

Responding officers should obtain any information that has not yet been obtained, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Have previous threats been received and the outcome of those threats The exact wording of the threat will assist in identifying the person if he/she has made previous calls;
2. Possible motives;
3. Where the device is reported to be located. This information may help in the location of the device or the planning of an evacuation;
4. When the device is reported to detonate;
5. Vulnerability of equipment and/or personnel;
6. What type of bomb, i.e. A dynamite, pipe bomb, etc.;
7. Description of the device;
8. Description of the voice of the caller, including speech, rate, style, slang, profanity, characteristics and impediments, etc.;
9. Did the voice sound familiar?
10. Description of the background noise;
11. Date and time of the call;
12. Length of the call;
13. Is a recording of the call available?
14. Any other questions which might assist the officer in determining the probability of an explosive device being on site.

When the probability of an explosive device has been established, telephone contact with the Communications Center is established and subsequent notification of the incident is made to the Commander of Special Operations, Patrol Services Captain, and Investigative Services Captain. The supervisor on scene advises the Communications Center regarding deployment of Fire/Rescue equipment.

Officers assist with the evacuation of persons who are in the vicinity of the device. It is not possible to know prior to an explosion how large an area must be evacuated. Thus, officers must rely upon common sense judgment in advising evacuated persons where to relocate. The location of a safe area should take into consideration the possibility of a secondary device, and a search of that area should be conducted to mitigate the possibility of a secondary device prior to occupying that area.

Search Procedures:

Searches are conducted at the discretion of the on scene supervisor after considering the existing circumstances. Searches involve a representative of, or someone familiar with, the location whenever possible. In general, police searches should be organized with at least two officers to a team. In some instances a search may be conducted without performing an evacuation of the location.

When an officer has probable cause to believe that a bomb threat exists and probable cause to believe that the safety of the public is in danger; an officer may search the area with or without the consent of the responsible party.

The areas to be searched and the extent of the search will depend on the following factors:

The type of establishment:

1. The possible motivation of the bomber/caller;
2. The accessibility of the building.

An attempt should be made to utilize personnel familiar with the areas to be searched when assigning searchers. Managers, custodians and employees of the business are likely to be more familiar with their work areas and able to recognize items that are suspicious or out of place. All searchers should be volunteers.

Persons involved in the search are advised not to pick up, touch or move any object found which is not familiar to them.

When a search fails to turn up any explosive or suspected explosive devices, officers should state only that a device was not found.

The search is discontinued when:

1. Directed by a supervisor;
2. Directed by Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit personnel;
3. The supervising officer is satisfied that the probability of finding a device by further search is minimal.

Evacuation:

Evacuation as a response to a bomb threat is the decision of the person responsible for the threat location. If any suspicious device has been seen, officers can recommend evacuation. Officers assist, to the extent possible, with the evacuation of affected persons.

Officers will not forcibly remove persons that appear to be mentally competent. In order to accomplish or assist with evacuations, officers report resistance to evacuation attempts to their immediate supervisors who attempt to persuade those persons to evacuate.

A supervisor establishes communications with a Fire Department on-scene supervisor as soon as possible.

Bomb Emergency:

When a call is received by Department personnel regarding a suspected bomb/explosive device or military ordnance which has been found, the person receiving the call attempts to obtain information regarding:

1. Description or type of device;
2. Location of device;
3. Quantity and characteristics of device.

The person receiving the call then notifies the Communication Center regarding the call and information received.

Communications Center Responsibilities:

When a call is received by Communications Center personnel regarding a suspected bomb/explosive device or military ordnance which has been found, the person receiving the call will:

1. Advise the reporting person to evacuate the concerned area immediately and take all available precautions;
2. Dispatch units as necessary for evacuation and establishing a perimeter;
3. Notify the Farmington Fire Department for dispatch of appropriate emergency equipment;
4. Advise the Patrol Supervisor of existing circumstances.

Dispatched Officers and Supervisors Responsibilities:

Dispatched officers and supervisors have the following responsibilities:

1. Upon discovery of a device or suspected device, a supervisor will be present at the incident location, if not already present;

2. Upon discovery of a device or suspected device, the shift supervisor makes notification to the Commander of Special Operations, Patrol Services Captain and Investigative Services Captain;
3. Upon discovery of a device or suspected device, when some evidence might indicate the presence of an explosive device, or after an explosion of a device, the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Unit is notified and responds;
4. All responding units cease voice radio and cellular phone transmissions within at least a 300-foot radius of the suspected or known device unless a car or vehicle borne device is suspected; the cordon would then be a minimum of 500 feet;
5. The dispatched officer ensures the evacuation of all occupants from the immediate area (300 feet or more) and attempts to view the area of the suspected device from a location that provides maximum protection;
6. Officers are responsible for perimeter security in the immediate area surrounding a suspect or known device.

Under no circumstances will an officer other than EOD Unit personnel push, touch, pick up, or in any way handle a suspected or known explosive device. When a suspected device is located, the dispatched officer is responsible for obtaining complete preliminary information (witness, calling party and persons present, information, etc.) and relaying this information to EOD Unit personnel as soon as possible.

The Fire Department has primary responsibility in the event a fire occurs or emergency medical treatment is required. Bomb Disposal and investigation remain the primary responsibility of the Police Department.

Delivered Explosive Ordnance:

When an explosive device or military ordnance is delivered to the Police Department, any substation, or other police facility, personnel will:

1. Attempt to detain the person who delivered the item;
2. Notify the patrol supervisor and advise him of the situation and location of the device;
3. Await instructions from the supervisor concerning action to be taken.

Detonated Devices:

When a bomb/explosive device has exploded, Communications Center personnel will:

1. Dispatch an adequate number of patrol units to the location. An attempt is made to keep the reporting party on the phone while officers are responding. Dispatched units should be kept updated on incoming information;
2. Notify the patrol supervisor of the call and situation;

3. Attempt to obtain as much information as possible from the reporting party concerning the location of the explosion, injuries and/or fire;
4. Notify Fire Department and ambulance for response;
5. Notify EOD Unit personnel to respond.

Dispatched Officers are responsible for establishing a security perimeter in the immediate area surrounding the explosion. The immediate area of any explosion should not be entered until the threat of further explosion has been reduced and the scene secured by qualified personnel.

When the danger to personnel and citizens has been reduced, the location of an explosion should be treated as a crime scene and processed for evidence.

A Detective may respond to assist in the initial investigation and follow-up efforts.

Call-out Criteria for EOD Unit Personnel:

EOD Unit actions and operations require a minimum of two bomb technicians. In some instances a primary technician may respond to the scene and make the determination on whether the call-out of a second technician is required, according to the following criteria:

1. When a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or when assistance is needed in conducting a search for a device;
2. When detonation of an explosive device has occurred (post blast);
3. When explosives have been found or are reported to the Department as part of an amnesty program;
4. When military ordnance has been found;
5. When assistance is requested or deemed necessary by a supervisor.